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SIPDIS

AIDAC

DEPT HHS WASHDC
CDC ATLANTA GA
USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
CJTF HOA PRIORITY
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC PRIORITY
USDA FAS WASHDC PRIORITY
SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/E, AF/EPS, AF/PD, EB, PRM/AF, IO
AID FOR A/AID, AA/DCHA, WGARVELINK, LROGERS, MHESS,
DCHA/OTI,
DCHA/OFDA FOR GGOTTLIEB, MMARX, IMACNAIRN, KCHANNELL
DCHA/FFP FOR JDWORKEN, JDRUMMOND, TANDERSON, DNELSON,
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SUBJECT: HORN OF AFRICA, STATE - USAID HUMANITARIAN
UPDATE NUMBER 2

REF: A) STATE 27057; B) NAIROBI 00968

¶1. This is the second update cable in response to Ref A request for bi-weekly reports on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. USAID Missions in Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, and REDSO/Somalia contributed to this report.

REGIONAL REPORTS

¶2. NAIROBI-BASED REGIONAL MEETINGS

¶A. REGIONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM: The 17th Greater Horn of Africa (GHA) Climate Outlook Forum was held in Nairobi from March 1-3, organized by the USAID-supported Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Climate Prediction and Applications Center (ICPAC). The forum brought together scientists involved in climate prediction to develop a forecast for the March to May 2006 rainfall season in the GHA and to review its implications. The consensus climate forecast is for an increased likelihood of near-normal to below-normal rainfall over the current drought affected region in the Horn of Africa during the March to May 2006 rainy season. The forecast is cause for serious concern, especially in southern Somalia where there are logistics difficulties in delivering assistance. The conclusion of the forum is that donors must immediately begin planning humanitarian assistance responses that are based on another failed agriculture season.

1B. REGIONAL HORN OF AFRICA MEETINGS: On March 8, UNOCHA held a workshop in Nairobi to develop a regional appeal for the drought in the Horn of Africa. UN, NGO, government and donor representatives from Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed that it was necessary to plan not only for just the current humanitarian emergency, but to link short term emergency interventions with medium and longer term plans to address the underlying causes of the crisis. The appeal will be regional in nature and will address two possible scenarios: 1) scenario of poor or failed rains in the March-June rainy season; and 2) scenario of good rains during the March-June period. The draft appeal will be circulated among group members within the next few weeks, and which we will forward to USAID/W.

1C. VISIT OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (WFP) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Mr. James Morris, the head of WFP, visited Kenya on March 2 - 5. U.S. Ambassador William Bellamy hosted a lunch for 15 Nairobi-based Chiefs of Mission to catalyze attention on the current East Africa drought, and generate international assistance. Mr. Morris spoke movingly about the dire situation he saw in El Wak, northeast Kenya, describing the animal carcasses lining roads, pastoralists arriving on their last camel, and the large numbers of destitute people now dependent on food aid. Mr. Morris said the situation was about "as bad as it gets" and urged the international community to respond.

1D. PASTORALIST WORKING GROUP (PWG) activities: The PWG met with FEWSNET, donors, representatives from the military civil affairs office on water initiatives, and participated in UN and NGO Horn of Africa ongoing

sector-specific meetings. It has completed a concept paper for a regional project to address root causes of famine in the Horn of Africa.

COUNTRY REPORTS

13. KENYA

UPDATE ON HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: The enormous detrimental effect of the two poor seasons (2005 long-rains and short-rains) on livelihoods and household food security suggests that households- capacity to cope has declined pointing to growing chronic food insecurity. Now that the recent Climate Outlook Forum has forecast another poor season in northeast Kenya, the humanitarian assistance community is preparing for the worst. Another poor season in the drought-hit areas will have catastrophic consequences on livelihoods and on household food insecurity. In addition to the lack of rains, limited purchasing power, political marginalization (in the pastoralist areas), limited livelihood options, and chronic vulnerability are exacerbating the effects of the drought in Kenya.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: More recent non-USG pledges include \$17.4 million from the UK, \$6.0 million from the EU (ECHO) (earmarked to partially cover in-land transport costs of GOK donated food), and \$4.4 million from Canada and \$1.2 million from France. At present, 33.4% of the total EMOP food requirement (395,000 MT) has been resourced (including the latest 22,090 MT of USG donations being processed). The UK has also contributed \$1.12 million towards emergency nutrition interventions led by UNICEF. To date the GOK has provided 152,984 MT of emergency food valued at \$32.5 million including their latest food contribution of 60,000 MT in response to the prevailing drought. In addition, the GOK has provided US\$27 million for transport and associated costs, \$5 million for livestock off-take and \$800,000 for water interventions in drought-affected pastoralist districts. Beyond this, FFP/W has allocated an additional \$25 million to respond

to the food crisis in Kenya. The commodity mix for this donation is currently being worked out by WFP/Kenya and USAID/Kenya.

Following the short rain assessment in February, UNICEF appealed for \$6.4 million to support emergency activities in the nutrition and health sectors. Significant international contributions, including \$350,000 from OFDA, have subsequently followed and UNICEF Kenya's Director reported this week that sufficient funding is available for emergency activities for the next three months. UNICEF, in coordination with the GOK Ministry of Water, also appealed in February for \$18.5 million to expand emergency water interventions in drought affected areas, including water tankering and borehole rehabilitation. Contributions to date for emergency water interventions total \$16.5 million, and a funding gap of \$2 million remains. OFDA received a proposal from UNICEF this week requesting an award to fill the remaining gap. USAID/ Kenya and OFDA/ECARO have reviewed the proposal and forwarded it to Washington with a recommendation to support.

14. ETHIOPIA

UPDATE ON HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: A recent visit by the Government of Ethiopia's (GOE) Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) to Jijiga, the Somali Regional capital, sent a loud message: the current drought emergency is a front burner issue within the government.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) has continually pressured the GOE's Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Agency (DPPA) to hold regular coordination meetings with donors and partners. So far, DPPA has not done so. UNOCHA is planning a coordination meeting next week to fill the void.

The Oromiya Regional Government has requested that GOE's Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Agency (DPPA) Early Warning Working Group (EWWG) reassess the situation in Borena zone. The EWWG Chairperson notes that the beneficiary estimates may be too low. The reassessment will start on March 16, with CARE-Ethiopia, WFP, UNOCHA, FAO and USAID participating.

On March 10, The Afar Regional Agriculture and Natural Resources Bureau and FAO held a meeting in Semera, the capital of Afar. Pastoralist Livelihoods Initiative (PLI) partners, UN organizations, and local authorities participated in the meeting to discuss the early migration of Afar pastoralists and the growing concern of a worsening drought situation in other parts of Afar Region. The participants did not agree on a drought response plan; however, joint NGO-Regional Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Bureau field assessments will be undertaken in the next 2 weeks.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: In general, there have been few new commitments since previous Ref B. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan launched the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) on March 9. The fund seeks to obtain rapid assistance for the humanitarian crisis and to respond to neglected emergencies. \$1.8 million contribution from the CERF to Ethiopia has been allocated to the various UN organizations with \$630,000 going to UNICEF, \$350,000 to WHO, and \$400,000 to FAO. Of the large donors, the European Union has not yet made a commitment to the GOE's 2006 Humanitarian Appeal. Norway, Oxfam International, and Turkey made the most recent commitment of USD 700,000 to the water and sanitation request.

WFP PIPELINE AND DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: The once positive pipeline outlook for 2006 has quickly vanished as the food needs for the second half of the year become apparent. The wheat pipeline will now break at the end

of June with beneficiary numbers expected to increase substantially in the second half of the year indicating a need for an additional 200,000 MT of food from July-December of 2006. The additional food requirements include the predicted needs in pastoral areas from July-December, which were not reflected in the original GOE humanitarian appeal document. In addition, there continues to be a need for additional supplementary food for blanket distributions for the Productive Safety Net Program in chronically food insecure Woredas.

Additional contributions towards the WFP PRRO includes EURO 1 million from Italy for local purchase of FAMIX and a pending EURO 8 million donation from the EU, which WFP will likely borrow against until the pledge is finalized in late summer 2006.

UPDATES ON FOOD SECURITY SITUATION AND OUTLOOK: Drought conditions are worsening in existing hot spot zones and spreading to new zones. According to field level information and the National Meteorological Agency (NMA), rainfall has started (though late by one month) in the main belg crop dependent areas but it is too early to judge performance at this time. The pastoralist Borena and Guji zones of the Oromiya region have also received some showers, which has given some false hope as these few showers are not sufficient to mitigate the current drought conditions. The majority of Somali Region has not yet received rains in March, except for some showers reported in Jijiga. The NMA outlook shows that there is a possibility of rain around March 20 in these areas. Even if we assume that there will be rains, these areas need much more time for recovery. Previous experience shows that rain after very long dry spells can actually cause deaths of livestock as animals in a weakened state are more susceptible to disease and can be compromised by too much water intake and by eating unmatured pasture.

The Pastoralist Livelihoods Initiative (PLI) partners continue to implement livestock emergency response and non-emergency activities. For the emergency response through May 2006, they plan to commercially off-take 134,000 animals, vaccinate 163,000 animals, and feed around 20,000 animals.

The arrival of food at distribution sites is still a concern and efforts are underway to improve distribution information through increased monitoring and through a newly developed detailed logistics spreadsheet indicating delivery dates and locations. A WFP-led assessment into Liban and Afder zones of the Somali Region found that distributions have increased in most Woredas, which is a positive sign. Unfortunately, beneficiaries have also increased in these hot spot areas. DPPA continues to work with the Ministry of Defense to increase the number of military escorts accompanying food aid deliveries.

OTHER TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST: Cereal prices had shown some signs of declines at the beginning of February creating some hope that market related interventions (government release of grain and the GOE's grain export ban) would decrease prices in a sustainable manner. However, prices continued to increase after some signs of stability after the first fifteen days of February. So, despite the interventions and the very high GOE crop yield report, the supply of grain continues to be very tight and prices continue to increase.

15. SOMALIA

UPDATE ON HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: Increased population movements have been reported for the last two weeks in southern Somalia. The movements are mainly

towards permanent water sources. For instance, more people have moved from Bay Region to Middle Juba. Population movements were also reported from within Bay Region, Lower Shabelle and Bakool to Baidoa town. The Somalia Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in Baidoa tends to attract more people who are looking for employment and social support. Limited cross border population movements into Kenya were also reported in Juba valley and the Gedo regions. Increased livestock death especially cattle has been reported in Gedo and parts of Juba valley. This is mainly due to the distance between watering points and grazing area, coupled with weakened body condition. Water trucking and borehole repair are underway across southern Somalia. Agencies are expected to sign onto common guiding principles for water trucking, which are being drafted.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: ECHO has provided 9 million EURO for country-wide emergency programs in Somalia this fiscal year and has earmarked another 2 million Euro from their Regional Drought Emergency Fund for drought specific interventions. Further funding is dependent on the outcome of the next rainy season. OFDA is currently processing proposals from several new and current implementing partners in southern Somalia for drought specific activities in middle Juba, and Bakool Region. On food aid for FY 06, the USG has allocated \$53 million for CARE and WFP. The UK, Italy and Canada are other major food aid donors. The WFP pipeline is 80% resourced through July 2006. If the rains are poor, it is estimated that up to 100,000 MT will be required from July through December 2006.

UPDATE ON FOOD SECURITY AND OUTLOOK: Based on early predictions for the upcoming GU rainy season (April-June), the FSAU has issued warning that parts of Southern Somalia are at high risk of famine/humanitarian catastrophe from July to December 2006. The FSAU together with FEWS/NET are asking all stakeholders to prepare for a worst-case humanitarian and livelihood scenario in southern Somalia. In northern and central region, on-going acute food and livelihood crisis are likely to continue, impeding recovery from the previous drought two years ago. There are reports of high human mortality during the first two weeks of March in Gedo region. Staff from the FEWSNET Somalia office will be traveling this week to verify. At risk for famine populations are estimated to increase from the current 900,000 to 1.3 million.

OTHER TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST: Generally cereal prices continue to increase, while livestock prices decline. Due to shortages, sorghum prices increased throughout southern Somalia by 19%. Agro pastoral and pastoral households in the south are squeezed between increased cereal prices and decreased livestock prices. Consequently, terms of trade between goats and local cereals have dropped by 5%.

16. DJIBOUTI

UPDATES ON HUMANITARIAN/DIPLOMATIC FRONT: The Djiboutian government has distributed several weeks

worth of food aid to vulnerable drought affected Djiboutians.

DONOR RESPONSE UPDATE: The WFP pipeline is about 65% resourced, including \$1 million from the USG, and \$600,000 from the Netherlands.

UPDATE ON FOOD SECURITY AND OUTLOOK: Successive rainfall failures and subsequent food insecurity have eroded livestock asset holdings as a result of mortality and distress sales. There is a decline in livestock prices due to their deteriorating body condition and a rise in food prices by up to 25-30% which is causing a

worsening of pastoral household purchasing power. Livestock concentration around water points is resulting in a high incidence of water borne diseases. In Jan/Feb 47,500 persons are on WFP's emergency food assistance at full ration and the numbers are rising. An increase in the number of drought victims by 40% is expected in the coming months, while the number of people at risk of serious food insecurity may be as high as 150,000.

CONCLUSION

17. Overall, the food security situation is deteriorating in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Djibouti. The number of food aid insecure people is rising, and food aid and non-food aid needs are increasing. The Regional Climate Outlook Forum recently issued forecasts that suggest there will be an average to poor long rains season (March - May) in the pastoralist Horn of Africa zone. Food pipelines are weak, and will break over the summer unless more donor contributions are received. The Somalia situation is particularly grave, with famine conditions already being predicted from July - December 2006, and with ongoing logistics constraints affecting food of delivery. As the drought worsens, the potential for conflict will increase. Host governments, humanitarian organizations and donors need to mobilize additional resources to mitigate the consequences of the drought. ROWE